1st March 1929] [Mr. A. Kaleswara Rao]

Secretaries. In that way the costliness of the administration is increasing from year to year. They find funds for all this and not for the redress of the grievances of the ill paid officials of the Government, such as village monigars, vettis, talayaris, and the elementary schoolmasters. That is the chief feature even in the present Budget.

"With regard to the grievances of the masses who are groaning under heavy taxation and whose indebtedness is proverbial, the Budget has not even sought to find a solution. We see, Sir, that during these ten years the revenues of the Government have increased considerably. We have practically reached the maximum of taxation that the people can bear. If the Government could not do anything for them by way of remission of taxation, by way of at least making the assessment of revenue permanent or by way of giving them real relief, by improving agricultural methods and giving industrial, vocational and agricultural education, by improving the cottage industries, rural sanitation, etc., and making their life happy and contented now when taxation has reached the highest point, I do not know when they can do so. The Government have not cared to introduce the Land Revenue Bill by which the revenue assessment could be brought under the control of the Legislative Council preventing arbitrary resettlements. The Government have felt nervous in giving relief to the zamindari ryots by bringing an amending Bill to the Estates Land Act providing for remission in zamindaris and for redress of grievances of the ryots in respect of forests, tank repairs, etc. The Government are afraid of opposition from the zamindars and that is why they hesitate to bring in an amending Bill.

"I see, Sir, that penal assessment is expected to bring in Rs. 7,65,000 in the new year. Sir, so much income is expected from water-rate charged by way of penal assessment for taking water without the permission of Government for irrigating dry lands. Instead of the Government thanking the ryots for bringing lands under cultivation which are not fit for any cultivation at all, they are levying every year several lakhs by way of penal assessment. There have been several questions about this in this House. The poor ryots of the Kistna Eastern delta are groaning under this penal assessment. This year the Government have a surplus of four crores and odd to begin a new year with. With this opening balance, instead of beginning in right earnest the Excise reform the Government thought it fit to discharge some debts and to keep two crores and odd as opening balance for the next year. Really the Finance Member has had the best opportunity to do this, now that the provincial contributions have been remitted and there is a large surplus. He should have cut off some portion of the Excise revenue—a revenue from drink which is ruining so many millions of our people. The Excise question is a question of the masses, of the labourers and of the petty agriculturists."

III

PAPER LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE HOUSE.

Annual Report[a] on the working of the Local Audit Department, Madras, for 1927–28.

The House adjourned to meet again at 11 o'clock the next day.

R. V. KRISHNA AYYAR.
Secretary to the Legislative Council.

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[a] Printed separately.